AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Part 1

Show #212

BOOK TWO: EARTH

CHAPTER TWELVE: "Journey to Ba Sing Se, Part 1: The Serpent's Pass"

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Part 2

BOOK TWO: EARTH

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: "Journey to Ba Sing Se, Part 2: "The Drill"

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ACT I

EXT. WATERFALL POND - LATER

Sokka looks over some of the scrolls from the library -- he looks deep in concentration. High above the pond, Katara is standing on a rock. She runs and jumps off it, doing an elaborate cannonball dive with many flips and somersaults.

KATARA
Waterbending bomb! Yeah.

Katara enters the water "cannonball-style," creating an impact so huge that it empties the pond of the water for a moment. Most of the water splashes back into the pond but some of it falls like rain on the kids. Toph and Aang LAUGH. It also rains on Sokka and his maps.

SOKKA
Sure, five thousand year old maps from the spirit library -- just splash some water on them.

KATARA
Sorry.

Katara Waterbends the maps dry.

AANG
So did you figure what route we're going to take?

Everyone crowds around as Sokka shows them the map. ANGLE ON: a map of the Earth Kingdom -- Sokka points to it as he talks.

SOKKA
Okay, we just got out of the desert so we must be around here... and we need to go to Ba Sing Se, which is here. It looks like the only passage connecting the South to the North is this sliver of land called the "Serpent's Pass."

TOPH
You sure that's the best way to go?

SOKKA
It's the only way. I mean it's not like we have Appa to fly us there.

KATARA
(sotto, to Sokka)
Shush up about Appa... can't you at least try to be sensitive?

Aang sees what Katara is doing.

AANG
Katara, it's okay. I know I was upset about losing Appa before, but I just want to focus on getting to Ba Sing Se, and telling the Earth King about the solar eclipse.

Katara is surprised Aang is handling it so well.

KATARA
Oh. Well, okay. I'm glad you're doing better.

Sokka shuts the map.

SOKKA
Then to Ba Sing Se we go. No more distractions.

TAHN (O.S.)
(calling out)
Hello there, fellow refugees!

The kids turn to see THREE FRIENDLY REFUGEES (a jolly man, TAHN, his very pregnant wife, YING, and his sister, SE) waving at them. Off Sokka's reaction...

EXT. WATERFALL POND - MORE MOMENTS LATER

The refugees and the kids are now all together.

AANG
So are you guys headed to Ba Sing Se too?

TAHN
Sure are. We're trying to get there before my wife Ying has her baby.

KATARA
Great. We can travel through the Serpent's Pass together.

YING
(shocked)
The Serpent's Pass?! Only the truly desperate take that deadly route!

TOPH
Deadly route... great pick, Sokka.

SOKKA
Well, we are desperate.

TAHN
You should come with us to Full Moon Bay. Ferries take refugees across the lake -- it's the fastest way to Ba Sing Se.

YING
And it's hidden, so the Fire Nation can't find it.

KATARA
Hmm, peaceful ferry ride, or deadly pass?

EXT. FULL MOON BAY - DAY

The kids and refugees arrive at the port. It's a secluded location hidden by tall mountains and a forest. The kids see the lines of refugees of all ages and stature. Some mill about by their tents while others wait in long lines in front of small shacks. Several ferries are docked at the shore and some are just leaving. This place is a cross between a bus station and a DMV.

KATARA
I can't believe how many people's lives have been uprooted by the Fire Nation.

TAHN
We're all looking for a better life, safe behind the walls of Ba Sing Se.

EXT. FERRY - LOWER DECK - THE SAME TIME

A ferry full of various refugees is leaving the docks. Uncle looks out over the lake.

UNCLE
(musing)
Who would have thought, after all these years, I'd return to the scene of my greatest military disgrace... as a tourist!

He smiles broadly and puts on a funny vacation hat.

ZUKO
Look around. We're not tourists, we're refugees.

Zuko takes a bite of some bread.

ZUKO (cont'd)
(SPITTING) Ugh. I'm sick of eating rotten food... sleeping in the dirt. I'm tired of living like this.

JET (O.S.)
Aren't we all.

Zuko turns to see JET, SMELLERBEE, and LONGSHOT approach.

JET (cont'd)
My name's Jet. And these are my freedom fighters: Smellerbee and Longshot.

SMELLERBEE
Hey.

Longshot nods because he never talks.

ZUKO
Hello.

JET
Here's the deal -- I hear the captain's eating like a king, while us refugees have to feed off his scraps. Doesn't seem fair, does it?

Zuko eyes Jet suspiciously, then looks down at his moldy bread. Uncle's interest is piqued.

UNCLE
What sort of king is he eating like?

JET
The fat, happy kind.

Uncle licks his lips.

JET (cont'd)
(to Zuko)
You want to help us 'liberate' some food?

A beat. Then Zuko tosses his bread over the deck.

ZUKO
I'm in.

Jet smiles.

EXT. FULL MOON BAY - KIOSK LINE - LATER

Katara, Sokka and Aang are at the front of a line and step up to the kiosk to talk to the BUREAUCRAT, a short, short-tempered, humorless woman. The CABBAGE MERCHANT (from 1.05 And 1.09) is in front of them in line with his cart of cabbages.

BUREAUCRAT
(to cabbage merchant)
I told you already, no vegetables on the ferry -- one cabbage slug could destroy the entire ecosystem of Ba Sing Se. SECURITY!

Two manly security guards approach, leading a trained platypus bear on a leash. The bear smashes the cart with one angry swoop of his claw and then begins voraciously devouring the cabbages. (The guards and platypus bear are dressed in distinct Earth Kingdom security uniforms.)

CABBAGE MERCHANT
(horrified)
My cab-ba-ges!

BUREAUCRAT
Next!

The kids nervously approach.

AANG
Umm... four tickets for the ferry to Ba Sing Se, please.

BUREAUCRAT
Passports?

AANG
Uh, no one told us we had to have passports...

SOKKA
Don't you know who this is? He's the Avatar!

BUREAUCRAT
Aah, I see fifty Avatars a day and by the way, not a very impressive costume.

Momo scurries onto Aang's shoulder.

BUREAUCRAT (cont'd)
Besides, no animals allowed -- do I need to call security?

Aang and Momo look over at the security guards and platypus bear still gobbling cabbages. The platypus bear eyes Momo.

AANG
That won't be necessary...

They slink away.

BUREAUCRAT
Next!

Just then, Toph walks up eating some food, having heard the tail end of Aang's rejection.

TOPH
I'll take care of this.

Toph hands off her food to Aang. The kids watch as she confidently walks up to the bureaucrat. She pulls out her passport and lays it on the kiosk counter in front of the bureaucrat. Her passport looks especially important with the Beifong flying boar seal stamped in gold.

TOPH (cont'd)
My name is Toph Beifong and I'll need four tickets.

The bureaucrat looks at Toph's passport, extremely impressed. She turns from being crabby to being overly accommodating.

BUREAUCRAT
Ahh... the golden seal of the flying boar! It's my pleasure to help anyone of the Beifong family.

TOPH
It is your pleasure. As you can see I am blind and these three imbeciles are my valets.

The bureaucrat looks at the kids who put on imbecilic faces and nod in agreement. Momo crawls up on Toph's shoulder.

BUREAUCRAT
But the animal--

TOPH
Is my seeing-eye lemur.

BUREAUCRAT
Well, normally it's only one ticket per passport... but this document is so official -- I guess it's worth four tickets.

The bureaucrat stamps four tickets then stamps the passport then hands them to Toph.

TOPH
Thank you very much.

Toph walks up to the kids who are impressed. As they walk away from the kiosk counter...

SOKKA
Alright, we scammed that lady good!

As the other kids walk off, Sokka is stopped by a uniformed FEMALE SECURITY OFFICER. It's SUKI (from episode 1.04), but Sokka doesn't recognize her without makeup and in her security guard outfit.

SUKI
Tickets and passports please.

SOKKA
(thinking they're busted)
Is there a problem?

SUKI
Yeah, I got a problem with you. I've seen your type before, probably sarcastic, think you're hilarious -- and let me guess, you're traveling with the Avatar.

Sokka gives her a look, trying to place her face.

SOKKA
Do I know you?

SUKI
You mean you don't remember? Maybe you remember this.

Suki leans in and kisses his cheek. Sokka instantly knows who it is...

SOKKA
Suki!

Suki smiles and hugs Sokka.

SUKI
Sokka, it's so good to see you.

EXT. FULL MOON BAY - WAITING AREA - DAY

The kids are waiting for the ferry with Suki.

KATARA
You look so different without your makeup. And the new outfit...

SUKI
That crabby lady makes all the security guards wear them. And look at you, sleeveless guy -- been working out?

SOKKA
(shrugging it off)
Eh, I'll grab a tree branch and do a few chin touches every now and then, nothing major.

He flexes, still acting casual and modest.

AANG
Are the other Kyoshi warriors around?

SUKI
Yeah. After you left Kyoshi, we wanted to find a way to help people. We ended up escorting some refugees, and we've been here ever since.

Momo suddenly jumps onto Suki's lap and CHITTERS.

SUKI (cont'd)
Hi Momo, good to see you too.
(to kids)
So why are you guys getting tickets for the ferry? Wouldn't you just fly across on Appa?

There is an awkward silence. Suki looks at everyone.

KATARA
Appa is missing. We hope to find him in Ba Sing Se.

SUKI
I'm so sorry to hear that.
(to Aang)
Are you doing okay?

Aang looks up at everyone who is looking at him, concerned.

AANG
(defensive)
I'm doing fine. Would everyone stop worrying about me?

Suddenly, the refugees from earlier approach them, panicked.

YING
Avatar Aang, you have to help us -- someone took all of our belongings. Our passports, our tickets -- everything's gone!

AANG
I'll talk to the lady for you.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FULL MOON BAY - KIOSK LINE - LATER

Aang is facing the bureaucrat again, the refugees and kids stand nearby.

BUREAUCRAT
No passports, no tickets!

AANG
But she's pregnant and all their stuff was stolen -- you have to make an exception!

BUREAUCRAT
No exceptions. If I just gave away tickets willy nilly to anyone -- there would be no more order! And you know what that means -- no more civilization!

AANG
What if we gave them our tickets?

BUREAUCRAT
No.

AANG
But--

BUREAUCRAT
Next!

Aang slumps in defeat and walks over to the refugees. Everyone looks disappointed, but then Aang straightens up, confidently.

AANG
Don't worry. You'll get to the city safely.
(determined)
I'll lead you through the Serpent's Pass.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

EXT. FULL MOON BAY - ANOTHER LOCATION - LATER

Sokka is looking off at the ferry which is sailing away. The kids and refugees are getting ready for their journey through the Serpent's Pass.

SOKKA
I can't believe we gave up our tickets, and now we're going through the Serpent's Pass...

TOPH
I can't believe you're still complaining about it.

Suddenly, Suki approaches wearing her Kyoshi warrior outfit.

SUKI
I'm coming too.

Sokka seems bothered by this.

SOKKA
Are you sure that's a good idea?

SUKI
Sokka, I thought you'd want me to come.

SOKKA
I do, it's just--

SUKI
Just what?

SOKKA
Nothing. I'm glad you're coming.

Everyone starts to leave.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS ENTRANCE - DAY

The group arrives at the Serpent's Pass and sees just how harrowing it is. A long, narrow path separates the Eastern lake from the Western lake. There are areas of the pass that are high above the water with steep cliffs on either side and other parts that look like they are submerged into the lake.

SOKKA
This is the Serpent's Pass? I thought it would be more windy -- you know, like a serpent. Hmm, I guess they misnamed it.

YING
Look at this writing. How awful.

They all look at a sign in front of the entrance to the pass.

TOPH
What does it say?

KATARA
It says, "abandon hope."

YING
How can we abandon hope? That's all we have.

AANG
I don't know. The monks used to say that hope is just a distraction. So maybe we do need to abandon it.

Everyone looks at Aang like he's a crazy person.

KATARA
What are you talking about?

AANG
Hope isn't going to get us into Ba Sing Se and it's not going to find Appa. We need to focus on what we're doing right now and that's getting across this pass.

KATARA
(concerned)
Okay. If you say so.

Aang, looking determined, leads the way onto the Serpent's Pass -- everyone follows.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - MIDDLE AREA - EVENING

The group stops walking when they come to an especially scary section of the pass. We see that the thin path runs along the face of a very large cliff, facing the western lake.

And to make matters worse, Fire Nation ships are patrolling the waters.

SUKI
The Fire Nation controls the Western Lake. Rumor has it, they're working on something big on the other side, and they don't want anyone to find out what it is.

Aang and Katara lead the group, trying to be as quiet as possible.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - CLIFFSIDE PATH - LATER

They are sneaking across the path, high above the water. Tahn steps too close to the edge, and some of the ground gives way, triggering a large landslide which SPLASHES into the water. Toph Earthbends a ledge to catch Tahn before he falls. The group stops and glares at Tahn.

TAHN
I'm okay.

They turn to look at the Fire Nation ships who have now spotted them. One of the ships launches a fireball at them.

SOKKA
They spotted us! Let's go, let's go!

Katara, Sokka and Suki help usher the refugees as fast as possible up the path. As the WHIZZING SOUNDS grow louder, Aang leaps off the side of the cliff and does a huge Airbending blast that pulverizes the fireball.

The Fire Nation ships launch several more fireballs that crash into the cliff above the path triggering a rock slide. Sokka sees that the rock slide is about to hit Suki! Sokka quickly pushes Suki out of the way but now the rock slide is about to hit him! Sokka braces himself when suddenly, Toph Earthbends the rocks away, saving Sokka. Sokka quickly runs up to Suki.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Suki, are you okay?! You have to be more careful! Come on.

Sokka takes Suki's hand and ushers her up the path and out of the range of the fireballs. Toph follows.

TOPH
(to herself)
Thanks for saving my life, Toph.
Hey, no problem, Sokka.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - CAMPSITE - DUSK

The group makes it to one of the highest parts of the pass. They are all tired. Everyone begins to put their stuff down and set up camp. We see Tahn help Ying lower herself to the ground, and he kneels to rub her swollen feet. Sokka notices Suki setting up near the edge.

SOKKA
Suki, you shouldn't sleep there. Who knows how stable this ledge is, it could give way at any moment.

Sokka begins to drag Suki's stuff to a safer area. Suki is clearly getting frustrated with Sokka's over-protectiveness.

SUKI
Sokka, I'm fine -- stop worrying.

SOKKA
You're right, you're right. You're perfectly capable of taking care of yourself.

Suki begins to sit down on her sleeping bag but Sokka suddenly stops her.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Wait!

He dramatically lunges forward, pushing her aside as if saving her life.

SOKKA (cont'd)
(calmly)
Oh never mind, I thought I saw a spider -- but you're fine.

Suki rolls her eyes and sits down.

EXT. FERRY - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

A guard makes his rounds, patrolling the upper deck. As he passes by, Zuko, Jet, and Smellerbee emerge from their hiding place. They peek through the window and see a bunch of food laid out on the table, as if for a feast.

Jet jimmies the lock open with his hooksword and he and Zuko enter. Smellerbee stays outside to keep watch.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Zuko and Jet use their weapons in a skilled way to collect the food. (i.e. Jet uses his hooksword to pick up a basket of pastries and put them in a sack. Zuko uses his broadsword to cut down some roast duck that's hanging up.)

SMELLERBEE (O.S.)
Guard's coming!

Jet and Zuko stuff the last of the food into sacks and exit.

EXT. FERRY - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Jet signals Longshot who is on the lower deck. Longshot fires an arrow with a rope attached to it. It hits the railing and Jet slides the food sacks down to him via the rope. Then, the three of them slide down the rope to the lower deck, just as the guard passes by again. The guard doesn't see a thing.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Aang is standing alone, looking out over the Eastern lake when Katara walks up to him.

KATARA
You know, it's okay to miss Appa.

There's a beat. Aang doesn't respond.

KATARA (cont'd)
What's going on with you? In the desert all you cared about was finding Appa and now it's like you don't care about him at all.

AANG
You saw what I did out there. I was so angry about losing Appa, I couldn't control myself. I hated feeling like that.

KATARA
But now you're not letting yourself feel anything.

Again, Aang doesn't respond.

KATARA (cont'd)
I know sometimes it hurts more to hope and it hurts more to care... but you have to promise me you won't stop caring.

There is a long beat as this sinks in. Katara smiles, and opens her arms to hug Aang...

KATARA (cont'd)
Come on, you need a hug.

... but Aang backs away and bows.

AANG
Thank you for your concern, Katara.

Aang turns and walks away leaving Katara alone and sad.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - CAMPSITE ANOTHER AREA - LATER

Sokka is alone, staring at the moon when Suki walks up.

SUKI
It's a beautiful moon.

SOKKA
Yeah, it really is...

Suki sits next to Sokka.

SUKI
Look, I know you're just trying to help, but I can take care of myself.

SOKKA
I know you can.

SUKI
Then why are you acting so overprotective?

Sokka looks back up at the moon as he tries to explain.

SOKKA
It's so hard to lose someone you care about. Something happened at the North Pole, and I couldn't protect someone. I don't want anything like that to ever happen again.

There is a long beat.

SUKI
I lost someone I cared about. He didn't die, he just went away. I only had a few days to get to know him, but he was smart and brave and funny...

Sokka is suddenly jealous.

SOKKA
Who is this guy? Is he taller than me?

SUKI
No, he's about your height.

SOKKA
Is he better looking?

SUKI
It is you, stupid.

SOKKA
Oh...

Sokka looks into Suki's eyes -- there is a connection. Suki leans in to kiss him, but at the last moment Sokka looks away.

SOKKA (cont'd)
I can't.

SUKI
I'm sorry...

SOKKA
No. You shouldn't be.

He gets up and leaves.

EXT. FERRY - LOWER DECK - NIGHT

Zuko and Uncle sit with Smellerbee and Longshot, feasting on the stolen food. Jet passes out some food to other refugees. Uncle looks at Smellerbee.

UNCLE
(to Smellerbee)
So Smellerbee -- that's an unusual name for a young man.

SMELLERBEE
Maybe it's because I'm not a man, I'm a girl!

She gets up, offended.

UNCLE
(calling after her)
Oh, now I see. It's a beautiful name for a lovely girl!

Before Smellerbee exits, Longshot stops her. He gives her a look that expresses more than words could.

SMELLERBEE
I know... you're right. As long as I'm confident with who I am, it doesn't matter what other people think. Thanks, Longshot.

Longshot nods. Jet comes over and sits down.

JET
From what I heard, people eat like this every night in Ba Sing Se. I can't wait to set my eyes on that giant wall.

UNCLE
It is a magnificent sight.

JET
So you've been there before?

A long beat.

UNCLE
Once. When I was a... different man.

JET
I've done some things in my past that I'm not proud of. But that's why I'm going to Ba Sing Se -- for a new beginning -- a second chance.

UNCLE
That's very noble of you. I believe people can change their lives if they want to. I believe in second chances.

Uncle looks over at Zuko as he says this.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - SUBMERGED AREA - MORNING

The group stops at an impasse where the trail is submerged underwater. Across the water (a few hundred yards away) the trail reemerges from the lake. Katara takes command.

KATARA
Everyone single file.

Katara inhales and exhales deeply, then thrusts her arms forward. Like a Waterbending Moses, she parts the water on either side, exposing the trail. She leads the group forward, bending the water as she goes. At first, the water is only a couple feet deep, but as the path descends deeper and deeper into the lake, Katara has difficulty holding back all the water.

KATARA (cont'd)
Aang, I need help!

Aang jumps to the front of the line and bends alongside Katara. The group walks along the bottom of the lake, surrounded by water walls -- it is an eerie sight.

Momo sees a fish and jumps in after it. (We can see Momo swimming after the fish through the water wall, like it's an aquarium exhibit.) Then, Momo sees a large, serpentine shadow swimming towards him. Panicked, Momo paddles his way out of the water wall and into Toph's arms.

MOMO
(PANICKED CHITTERING)

Suddenly, the dark shadow swims by even closer, very ominously. Everyone watches it with fear for a beat.

KATARA
What is that thing?

A moment later, the serpent dives through the open area into the other side of the lake. (At this point, we don't see the whole serpent, just part of its scaly body.) The force of the serpent is greater than Katara and Aang's bending. They lose their grip on the water and the walls begin to crash in around everyone. Toph quickly raises a pedestal of land underneath everyone and brings them to surface level. Now the group is standing on a tiny island of land in the middle of the lake, 50 feet from the other side. The shadow returns and circles their tiny island.

Suddenly, the shadow shoots out of the water and the group sees that it is a GIANT SERPENT!

SOKKA
I think I just figured out why they call it the Serpent's Pass.

The serpent rears its head, and lets out a SCREECHING HOWL.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - SUBMERGED AREA - MORNING

The giant serpent SCREECHES and lunges at the group. Aang gets in front of the refugees and does an Airbending blast that temporarily stuns the serpent and knocks it back.

SOKKA
Suki, you know about giant sea monsters -- make it go away!

SUKI
Just because I lived near the Unagi, doesn't mean I'm an expert!

The serpent circles around for another attack. Sokka holds up Momo.

SOKKA
(pronouncing)
Oh great and powerful sea serpent, please accept this humble and tasty offering. Thank you.

KATARA
(chastising)
Sokka.

AANG
I'll distract it. Katara, get everyone across.

The serpent swims toward the group. Aang takes off on his glider and swerves to the side, leading the serpent away from the refugees.

Meanwhile, Katara freezes the top of the water, creating an ice bridge from the island to the continuation of the land path. Then, Katara creates a small iceberg that she stands on. She freezes her feet into it for support, then uses Waterbending to propel herself toward the sea serpent (think of it like a really crude jet-ski.) The serpent turns his attention away from Aang and toward Katara. The serpent attacks Katara, who holds it back with ice and water.

Sokka and Suki grab the refugees and usher them across the ice bridge. Everyone makes it safely to the mainland, but someone's missing...

Sokka looks back to the island, where Toph nervously feels the ice with her toe.

SOKKA
Toph, come on! It's just ice!

Toph puts her foot on the ice as if she's going to cross, but then backs off. She acts tough, but she looks very scared.

TOPH
Actually, I'm gonna stay on my little island where I can see...

The serpent violently crashes into the water behind her.

TOPH (cont'd)
Okay, I'm coming!

Toph puts her foot on the ice again and tentatively starts to walk across.

SOKKA
(loudly and deliberately)
You're doing great! Just follow the sound of my voice!

TOPH
It's hard to ignore!

Meanwhile, Aang and Katara are still fighting the serpent. Katara jet-skis around it and freezes it in place. Aang follows up by smacking it on the top of the head with Airbending. The serpent splashes into the water and doesn't come back up.

Back on the ice bridge, Toph continues to make her way across.

SOKKA
You're almost there!

Then, the sea serpent rises out of the water, smashing through the ice bridge and shattering it. Toph falls into the water.

TOPH
(SCREAMS)

Aang (flying) and Katara (jet-skiing) swoop in and blast the serpent, knocking it away from where the ice bridge was. Toph resurfaces, gasping for air.

TOPH (cont'd)
Help! I can't swim!

SOKKA
I'm coming Toph!

Sokka starts to remove his clothing, but stumbles and falls.

SOKKA (cont'd)
("Oof")

Suki does a perfect, heroic dive into the water, then swims toward Toph. Toph goes under again and is sinking fast. Suki grabs her and pulls her up to the surface.

TOPH
(COUGHING AND SPUTTERING) Oh Sokka, you saved me!

Toph dramatically throws her arms around Suki and kisses her on the cheek.

SUKI
Actually, it's me.

Toph realizes her mistake, and blushes deeply.

TOPH
(very embarrassed)
Oh. Well.
(beat)
You can go ahead and let me drown now.

Meanwhile, Aang flies in circles around the serpent. His glider is at a 45 degree angle, skimming the water. Katara follows closely behind him. Together, they create a giant whirlpool that sucks the serpent underwater, ending the fight.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - END OF TRAIL - A LITTLE LATER

The group emerges from the end of the trail, looking weary and worn out. In the distance they see the outer wall of Ba Sing Se.

SOKKA
There's the wall! Now it's nothing but smooth sailing to Ba Sing Se.

Ying grabs her stomach and falls to her knees.

YING
Oh no.

SOKKA
What's wrong?

YING
The baby's coming!

Ying's husband helps her lie on the ground, propped against a rock. Se tries to comfort her. Sokka is in a panic.

SOKKA
What?! Now? Can't you hold it in or something?

KATARA
Sokka, calm down. I helped Gran Gran deliver lots of babies back home.

SOKKA
This isn't the same as delivering an arctic seal. This is a real... human... thing!

KATARA
It's called a baby -- and I helped her deliver plenty of those too.
(ordering the troops)
Aang, get some rags. Sokka -- water. Toph, I need you to make an earth tent -- a big one.

Aang and Sokka run off. Toph creates a large earth tent around Ying and the other refugees.

KATARA (cont'd)
Suki, come with me.

Katara and Suki enter the earth tent.

EXT. FERRY - MORNING

Zuko is looking out over the foggy lake.

JET
You know, as soon as I saw your scar, I knew exactly who you were.

Zuko looks nervous -- does Jet know who he really is?

JET (cont'd)
You're an outcast. Like me. And us outcasts have to stick together. We have to watch each other's backs. Because no one else will.

ZUKO
I've realized lately that being on your own isn't always the best path.

They look out over the lake and see the outer wall of Ba Sing Se emerge from the mist in the far distance -- could it be? Will they be buddies in Ba Sing Se?

INT. EARTH TENT - DAY

CLOSE ON: Ying, sweating and breathing heavily

YING
(LAMAZE STYLE BREATHING)

Reveal that Ying (covered in blankets) is surrounded by Tahn, Se, and Suki. Katara is near Ying's legs, coaching her on. (NOTE: This scene will be handled tastefully and with care.)

KATARA
You're doing great, Ying.
(yelling to Sokka)
Sokka, where's that water?!
(to Ying)
Now get ready to push. One, two, three... PUSH!

Just then, Sokka enters.

YING
(PUSHING NOISES)

Sokka gets woozy and faints.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - END OF TRAIL - LATER

Sokka, Aang, and Toph wait outside the earth tent. They hear the sound of a BABY CRYING.

KATARA (O.S.)
It's a girl!

Toph turns to Sokka.

TOPH
So you want to go see the baby or are you going to faint like an old lady again?

SOKKA
No, no I'm good this time.

Sokka and Toph exit leaving Aang alone. A moment later Katara comes out and motions to Aang.

KATARA
Aang, you have to come see this.

Aang enters the tent with Katara and sees...

INT. EARTH TENT - CONTINUOUS

Ying cradles the newborn baby in her arms. It is a beautiful moment. Everyone is visibly moved. The baby COOS.

TOPH
She sounds healthy.

KATARA
She's beautiful.

SOKKA
It's so... squishy looking.

Mother and father cuddle close with their new son. Aang stands just inside the tent door, watching. He looks visibly affected by the beauty of the moment -- the tough exterior he's put up through the episode fades away.

TAHN
What should we name her?

YING
I want our daughter's name to be unique. I want it to mean something.

Tears stream down Aang's cheeks, and he steps forward.

AANG
I've been going through a really hard time lately. But you've made me hopeful again.

YING
(contemplating)
I know what I want to name our baby now.

She looks down at her baby.

YING (cont'd)
Hope.

Tahn smiles.

TAHN
That's a perfect name -- Hope.

Katara smiles at Aang. Aang turns to her.

AANG
I thought I was trying to be strong, but really I was just running away from my feelings. Seeing this family together, so full of happiness and love -- it's reminded me how I feel about Appa.
(beat)
And how I feel about you.

Now Katara cries, as Aang reaches out and gives her a strong hug.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - END OF TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

Suki, is with the refugees. Katara, Sokka, and Toph say goodbye to Aang.

AANG
I promise, I'll find Appa as fast as I can. I just really need to do this.

SOKKA
See you in the big city.

Sokka gives him a manly pat on the back.

TOPH
Say hi to that big fuzzball for me.

Toph punches Aang on the shoulder. He winces. Aang goes up to Katara and gives her a big hug.

KATARA
You'll find him, Aang.

AANG
I know. Thank you, Katara.

Aang turns and opens his glider. Momo runs up to him.

AANG (cont'd)
You ready, Momo?

MOMO
(CHITTERS)

Katara watches as Aang flies away on his glider, Momo following him.

EXT. SERPENT'S PASS - END OF TRAIL - MOMENTS LATER

Sokka approaches Suki.

SUKI
Sokka, it's been really great to see you again.

SOKKA
Whoa, hold on -- why does it sound like you're saying goodbye?

SUKI
I came along because I wanted to make sure you got through the Serpent's Pass safely... but now I need to get back to the other Kyoshi warriors.

SOKKA
So you came along... to protect me?

Suki shrugs and smiles. Then she gets a serious look on her face as begins apologizing.

SUKI
Listen. I'm really sorry about last night. We were talking and... saying things... I just got carried away, and before I knew it--

Sokka interrupts her with a kiss.

SOKKA
You talk too much.

Suki grabs him back and they keep kissing.

EXT. BA SING SE - OUTER WALL - DAY

Aang and Momo ascend toward the outer wall, which is hundreds of feet tall. It is a long, difficult climb even on his glider. Aang lands on top of the wall to catch his breath.

AANG
(PANTING)

Momo hears something and looks over the edge. Aang turns and looks down the length of the wall, over the vast plain. In the distance, he sees a colossal METAL DRILL that is advancing toward the outer wall. Behind it are thousands of tanks and troops waiting to invade Ba Sing Se. Aang hangs his head. Momo jumps on his shoulder and CHITTERS.

AANG (cont'd)
Sorry Momo, Appa's gonna have to wait.

On the image of the drill we...

FADE TO WHITE.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. OUTER WALL - BA SING SE - DAY

The giant metal drill slowly moves toward the outer wall, creeping across the plains like a giant insect. Several small tanks flank it on either side, dwarfed by the 100-foot-tall mega-machine.

INT. DRILL - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Several workers man the controls -- watching gauges, opening and closing valves, etc. AZULA sits on a raised throne in the center of the room, flanked by MAI, TY LEE, and the WAR MINISTER (formerly the Emissary from 1.17.) Out the front window they see the outer wall getting closer and closer.

WAR MINISTER
(to Azula)
This drill is a feat of scientific ingenuity and raw, destructive power. Once it tunnels through the wall, our troops will storm their city. The Earth Kingdom will finally fall and you can claim Ba Sing Se in the name of your father. Nothing can stop us.

TY LEE
What about those muscle-y guys down there?

Ty Lee points to a platoon of Earthbenders assembling in the path of the drill.

WAR MINISTER
(dismissive)
Please. The drill's metal shell is impervious to any Earthbending attack.

AZULA
Oh, I'm sure it is, War Minister Qin. (PRON: ching) But just to be on the safe side... Mai and Ty Lee, take the Earthbenders out.

MAI
Finally, something to do.

Mai and Ty Lee exit.

EXT. OUTER WALL - AWAY FROM DRILL - THE SAME TIME

Sokka, Katara, and Toph are escorting TAHN, YING, her BABY, and SE (the refugees from 2.12) toward the wall when Aang swoops down on his glider to meet them. Everyone is surprised to see him.

KATARA
Aang, what are you doing here? I thought you were looking for Appa.

AANG
I was. But something stopped me. Something big.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. OUTER WALL - BA SING SE - LATER

Everyone stands on a platform of rock that Toph and Aang Earthbend up the side of the wall, like an earth elevator.

EXT. TOP OF OUTER WALL - MOMENTS LATER

The earth elevator reaches the top and everyone gets off.

SOKKA
Now what's so big that Appa has to wait?

Aang brings them over to the edge of the wall and they all see the giant drill below.

AANG
That.

Ying cradles her baby in her arms.

YING
We made it to Ba Sing Se, and we're still not safe. No one is.

Aang puts a hand on her shoulder. Suddenly, two GUARDS approach the group, brandishing spears.

GUARD
What are you people doing here? Civilians aren't allowed on the wall.

Aang steps forward.

AANG
I'm the Avatar. Take me to whoever's in charge.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TOP OF OUTER WALL - ANOTHER AREA - LATER

ANGLE ON: GENERAL SUNG, a slim, 50-year-old man who looks more like a bookkeeper than a military general. The refugees are no longer with the kids.

GENERAL SUNG
It is an honor to welcome you to the outer wall, young Avatar. But your help is not needed.

AANG
Not needed?

GENERAL SUNG
Not needed.

Aang smiles and a sparkle gleams off his teeth.

GENERAL SUNG (cont'd)
I have the situation under control. I assure you, the Fire Nation cannot penetrate this wall.

Sung leads them on a mini tour of the wall. As they walk across the top of the wall, we see various locations that give a sense of history and significance -- ie. lookout towers, soldiers bunkered down, etc. We also see the back of the wall - hundreds of stone dwellings stick out, giving the impression that the wall is its own city.

GENERAL SUNG (cont'd)
Many have tried to break through it, but none have succeeded.

TOPH
What about the Dragon of the West? He got in.

GENERAL SUNG
(flustered)
Well... technically yes. But he was quickly expunged.
(back on track)
(MORE)

GENERAL SUNG (cont'd)
Nevertheless, that's why the city is named Ba Sing Se -- it's the Impenetrable City. They don't call it Na Sing Se! (LAUGHS)
(then, humorlessly)
That means penetrable city.

The kids do not look amused. Sung and the kids overlook the battlefield, where the platoon of Earthbenders stands in the drill's path.

TOPH
Yeah, thanks for the tour, but we still got a drill problem.

GENERAL SUNG
Not for long. To stop it, I've sent an elite platoon of Earthbenders called the Terra Team.

SOKKA
That's a good group name. Very catchy.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - CONTINUOUS

There are several Earthbending platoons fighting on the battlefield, battling tanks. We follow the Terra Team which is led by a huge, burly EARTHBENDING CAPTAIN. He leads his men as they easily overturn and destroy some smaller tanks that flank the drill. With the tanks out of the way, the Captain turns his attention toward the drill.

EARTHBENDING CAPTAIN
Ready!

The Earthbenders line up on one side of the drill and take their stances.

EARTHBENDING CAPTAIN (cont'd)
Attack!

Starting with the Captain (who is closest to the drill) the Earthbenders do a chain-reaction type move. The move creates a giant column of earth that slams into the side of the machine at an angle, in an attempt to tip it. But the drill easily pulverizes the earth column with its steady progression.

The Earthbenders move back into formation, but they are ambushed by Mai and Ty Lee (who slide down the drill and attack from above.) Mai provides cover for Ty Lee, who uses her crazy acrobatics to get in close to the Captain and strike his pressure points, preventing him from bending. As the burly captain collapses limply, we...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TOP OF OUTER WALL - CONTINUOUS

General Sung transforms from confident general to panicking nincompoop.

GENERAL SUNG
We're doomed!

Sokka slaps him.

SOKKA
Get a hold of yourself, man!

GENERAL SUNG
(recovering)
You're right. I'm sorry.

The kids all give each other a look.

TOPH
Maybe you'd like the Avatar's help now?

GENERAL SUNG
(nodding)
Yes, please.

AANG
So the question is... how are we going to stop that thing?

Everyone looks at Sokka.

SOKKA
Why are you all looking at me?

AANG
You're the idea guy!

Sokka grimaces.

SOKKA
So I'm the only one who can ever come up with a plan? That's a lot of pressure...

KATARA
And also the complaining guy!

SOKKA
That part I don't mind.

INT. BA SING SE OUTER WALL - REFUGEE PROCESSING CENTER - DAY

Inside the wall, there is a large, refugee processing center - the Avatar version of Ellis island. Uncle and Zuko show their passports to a tough, older female PROCESSING AGENT. She looks at the passports, then eyes Uncle and Zuko skeptically.

PROCESSING AGENT
So... Mister Lee and Mister uh... Mushi, (PRON: MUSHY) is it?

UNCLE
It's pronounced MOO-she.

PROCESSING AGENT
You telling me how to do my job?

UNCLE
Uh... no, no.
(buttering her up)
But may I just say, you are like a flower in bloom. Your beauty is intoxicating.

The dry, withered processing agent looks at Uncle skeptically for a moment, then melts.

PROCESSING AGENT
(flirty)
You're pretty easy on the eyes yourself, handsome. (PURRING SOUND)

She stamps their passports and lets them through.

PROCESSING AGENT (cont'd)
Welcome to Ba Sing Se.

ZUKO
(to Uncle, as they walk away)
I'm going to forget I saw that.

ANGLE ON: Jet, Smellerbee, and Longshot in line. They watch Uncle and Zuko make it through the checkpoint.

JET
I think Lee would make a good freedom fighter. He's just trying to find his way in the world. Like us.

SMELLERBEE
You don't know anything about him, Jet.

JET
I know he didn't get that scar from a Waterbender.

SMELLERBEE
Besides, I thought we were going straight now.

JET
We are. And the new Freedom Fighters could use a guy like Lee. What do you think, Longshot?

Longshot gives a lengthy, mysterious look that is uninterpretable as a yes or no answer.

JET (cont'd)
I can respect that.

INT. OUTER WALL - INFIRMARY - LATER

Nurses tend to the wounded Terra Team. The kids and Sung are with the Captain, who looks fine except for the fact that he can barely move. Katara passes her hand over the Captain's shoulders and elbows, feeling for injuries.

GENERAL SUNG
What's wrong with him? He doesn't look injured.

KATARA
His chi is blocked.

Katara does a healing move to open up the Captain's chi paths. The Captain is able to move his arms again.

KATARA (cont'd)
Who did this to you?

EARTHBENDING CAPTAIN
Two girls ambushed us. One of them hit me with a bunch of quick jabs, and suddenly I couldn't Earthbend and I could barely move. Then she cartwheeled away!

Katara looks to Aang, scared.

KATARA
Ty Lee.
(beat)
She doesn't look dangerous, but she knows the human body and its weak points. It's like she takes you down from the inside.

Sokka starts excitedly pointing repeatedly at Katara.

SOKKA
(EXCITED NOISES)

KATARA
Yes?

SOKKA
What you just said! That's how we're going to take down the drill. The same way Ty Lee took down all these big Earthbenders!

Sokka's excitement infects everyone.

TOPH
(excited)
By hitting its pressure points!

AANG
(excited)
We'll take it down from the inside!

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

The drill is getting closer to the wall. The kids and Momo are hiding in a trench, just in front of the wall.

TOPH
Once I whip up some cover, you're not going to be able to see, so stay close to me.

Toph creates a dust cloud towards the drill.

TOPH (cont'd)
Run!

The kids all follow Toph as she leads them into the dust.

INT. DRILL - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Ty Lee points at the dust cloud approaching the drill.

TY LEE
Hey, look at that dust cloud. It's so... poofy. Poof.

She makes a "poof" hand gesture.

WAR MINISTER
(to Azula)
Don't worry, Princess. I'm sure it's nothing.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - THAT MOMENT

Toph leads Aang, Katara, Sokka, Momo, through the dust cloud. Suddenly, the giant drill bit emerges out of the dust. The kids realize they are running in the shadow of the drill bit, as it grinds along the earth. Toph bends a tunnel in the earth right next to the drill.

TOPH
Everyone into the hole!

The kids jump in, then Toph covers it like a fox hole. A patrol tank pulls up, but when the dust clears the kids are gone.

INT. FOXHOLE - PITCH BLACK

Nothing is visible.

SOKKA
It's so dark down here! I can't see a thing!

TOPH
Oh no, what a nightmare!

SOKKA
Sorry.

EXT. UNDERNEATH DRILL - CONTINUOUS

The kids emerge out of the tunnel and come up underneath the machine. Huge treads surround them on either side. Above them, the kids see the metallic underbelly of the drill passing by slowly. Sokka spots an opening between some pipes.

SOKKA
There!

Aang jumps up and grabs onto the bottom of the drill. He hangs down by his knees, grabs Katara's hands, and pulls her up into the drill. Momo follows. Sokka turns to see that Toph is just standing there.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Toph, come on!

TOPH
No way am I going in that metal monster. I can't bend in there. I'll try to slow it down out here.

SOKKA
Okay. Good luck.

Sokka jumps up and Aang pulls him up and they enter the drill. Toph kicks up a rock wedge underneath the drill, then digs her feet in the ground and takes a stance in an effort to slow it down. But the force of the drill is so powerful that it pushes Toph back. Toph grits her teeth and digs in. A mound of earth begins building up behind her.

INT. DRILL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the drill is full of valves and pipes spewing hot steam.

SOKKA
I need a plan of this machine -- some schematics that show what the inside looks like. Then we can find its weak points.

AANG
Where are we going to get something like that?

Sokka looks at the steam pipes and gets an idea. He starts hacking away at one of the pipes with his machete. It makes a loud, clanging noise.

AANG (cont'd)
What are you doing? Someone's going to hear us!

SOKKA
That's the point.

The pipe bursts, spewing steam everywhere. The kids hide.

SOKKA (cont'd)
(quietly)
I figure a machine this big needs engineers to run it. And when something breaks...

KATARA
(catching on)
They come to fix it!

A moment later, an ENGINEER walks through the thick fog of steam and closes a valve. The steam dissipates, revealing Katara standing there.

KATARA (cont'd)
Hi.

Katara Waterbends the steam, freezing the engineer to the wall. Sokka grabs some engineering plans from the guy and quickly scans them.

SOKKA
This'll work.
(to Engineer)
Thanks.

They all run off.

INT. DRILL - ANOTHER CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

The kids hide as they analyze the schematics for the drill.

SOKKA
It looks like the drill is made up of two main structures. There's the inner mechanism -- where we are now -- and the outer shell.
(pointing to schematic)
The inner part and the outer part are connected by these braces. If we cut through them, the entire thing will collapse!

The kids head off to the first brace.

EXT. BA SING SE OUTER WALL - MONORAIL WAITING AREA - DAY

Zuko and Uncle wait at the monorail station. Jet approaches them.

JET
So, you guys got plans once you're inside the city?

Just then, a tea salesman walks by with a tea cart.

TEA SALESMAN
Get your hot tea here! Finest tea in Ba Sing Se!

UNCLE
Ooh! Jasmine please.

Uncle hands him a coin and takes his tea. The salesman leaves as Uncle sits on a bench, sipping his tea.

UNCLE (cont'd)
(SPITTING IT OUT) Uggh. Coldest tea in Ba Sing Se is more like it. What a disgrace.

JET
(to Zuko)
Hey, can I talk to you for a second?

Zuko and Jet step away from Uncle to talk in private.

JET (cont'd)
You and I have a much better chance of making it in the city if we stick together. You want to join the Freedom Fighters?

A beat as Zuko considers this.

ZUKO
Thanks. But I don't think you want me in your gang.

JET
Come on, we made a great team looting that captain's food. Think of all the good we could do for these refugees.

ZUKO
I said no.

Jet looks a little miffed.

JET
Have it your way.

Zuko goes back to Uncle, still sitting on the bench, happily sipping a steaming cup of hot tea. Jet notices the steaming hot tea and eyes Uncle suspiciously before leaving. As soon as Jet is out of sight, Zuko knocks Uncle's tea to the ground.

UNCLE
Hey!

ZUKO
(sotto)
What are you doing Firebending your tea?! For a wise old man, that was a pretty stupid move.

Uncle looks down longingly at the spilled tea on the ground.

UNCLE
I know you're not supposed to cry over spilled tea, but... (SNIFFS) It's just so sad.

INT. DRILL - SPACE BETWEEN THE MECHANISM AND THE SHELL

Following the stolen schematics, Sokka leads Aang, Katara and Momo to the edge of the interior drill mechanism.

A tall chasm opens up before them as they see the space between the drill mechanism itself and the outer armor that encases it. Sokka points out one of the massive steel braces connecting the two together and holding up the drill.

SOKKA
Wow, it looks a lot thicker in person than it does in the plans. We're going to have to work pretty hard to cut through that.

KATARA
What's this "we" stuff? Aang and I are going to have to do all the work.

SOKKA
Look, I'm the plan guy, you two are the cut-stuff-up-with-Waterbending guys. Together, we're Team Avatar!

Off Aang and Katara's reactions we...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DRILL - SAME LOCATION - MOMENTS LATER

Aang and Katara are already in their opposing stances around the brace. Katara splits her water supply with Aang and they begin to alternately lash at it, iaido-style (Japanese quick-draw sword technique.) Their attacks have some effect, cutting at the metal, but it is minimal. They grit their teeth and hack away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DRILL - SAME LOCATION - LATER

Katara and Aang are still lashing away, straining from the effort of cutting such a large support. They take a breather.

SOKKA
Come on, team! Don't quit now! We're--
(Katara shoots him a scowl)
I mean, <u>you're</u> almost there!

They resume their strikes vigorously, and finally manage to split all the way through the brace. We hear a groan in the metal as the weight of the mechanism shifts a bit, but nothing else happens.

KATARA
(exhausted)
At this rate we won't do enough damage before the drill reaches the wall.

AANG
I don't know how many more of those I have in me.

They hear a new sound above the din, accompanied by a rumbling that shakes the whole drill.

SOKKA
Do you hear that? We took it down! We better get out of here fast!

Sokka is suddenly interrupted by a disembodied voice coming out of the communication pipes:

WAR MINISTER (V.O.)
Congratulations, crew! The drill has made contact with the wall of Ba Sing Se! Start the countdown to victory!

We hear the distant roar of Fire Nation crew members CHEERING (like a testosterone filled football stadium) as the kids take this in with horror.

EXT. OUTER WALL OF BA SING SE - CONTINUOUS

The gigantic drill bit tears into the smooth, stone wall. Huge chunks of rock and dust clouds spin off in all directions. Huge amounts of debris are channeled back through the flutes (the spiral grooves on the drill bit) toward the body of the machine.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

EXT. OUTER WALL OF BA SING SE - CONTINUOUS

The drill bit is embedded deeply in the wall now. The massive amounts of debris continue to channel through the flutes of the bit. The displaced rock debris actually flows inside the machine (this allows the machine behind the bit to pass entirely through the wall.) At the point where the debris enters the machine, we see strong streams of water blasting into the channels of moving rock, creating a mixture like wet concrete, called SLURRY. The slurry flows much more easily than the dry rock through the pipelines in the machine.

The gargantuan machine advances with caterpillar-like movement as it retracts its forward-most jacks and pushes its "body" towards the wall.

INT. DRILL - SPACE BETWEEN THE MECHANISM AND THE SHELL - CONTINUOUS

Sokka is comically wedged between the cut brace and a support beam. He pushes with all his might against the cut brace, in a futile effort to budge it. Katara and Aang (with Momo) rest, racking their brains for a solution.

SOKKA
Come on brace, budge! (COMICAL PUSHING NOISES)

KATARA
(rubbing her wrist)
This is bad. Really bad.

Aang looks at Sokka who is giving all his energy into pushing an immovable steel brace. After nothing happens, Sokka relents, winded.

SOKKA
(breathing heavy)
We're putting everything we've got into busting these braces but it's taking too long.

AANG
Maybe we don't need to cut all the way through...

Aang hops to his feet and approaches Sokka.

AANG (cont'd)
Toph has been teaching me that you shouldn't give one hundred percent of your energy into any one strike. Sokka, take a fighting stance.

Aang demonstrates some kung fu (lightly, but humorously) on a wary Sokka as he speaks.

AANG (cont'd)
You've gotta be quick and accurate - - hit a series of points and break your opponent's stance.

Aang rapidly pokes a series of points on Sokka and simultaneously kicks his stance wide.

AANG (cont'd)
And when he's reeling back, you deliver the final blow.

Aang lightly bonks Sokka on the top of the head.

AANG (cont'd)
His own weight becomes his downfall, literally.

Indeed, Sokka falls to the ground. Katara nods, impressed. Sokka sits up, rubbing his head.

KATARA
So we just need to weaken the braces, instead of cutting all the way through.

AANG
Then I'll go to the top of this thing and deliver the final blow.

SOKKA
And BOOM! It all comes crashing down.

The three get a new look of resolve in their eyes.

AANG
Everyone inside that wall -- the whole <u>world</u> -- is counting on us.

SOKKA
The whole world minus the Fire Nation, that is.

They set off into action.

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE DRILL - CONTINUOUS

Toph, stubborn as a mule, holds her stance pushing against the rock wedge, trying to slow the machine down. A huge mound of earth has piled up behind her heels.

TOPH
(gritting through her teeth)
Come on, twinkle toes, hurry up.

INT. DRILL - TOP SPACE BETWEEN THE MECHANISM AND THE SHELL - CONTINUOUS

In a montage, Sokka (consulting the schematic) leads Katara and Aang to a series of braces around the circumference of the massive drill mechanism. They fiercely slash and cut into the metal.

AANG
That's enough! We need to get to the next one.

INT. BRIDGE OF DRILL MACHINE - CONTINUOUS

The War Minister, Azula, Ty Lee and Mai observe the progress. A bells RINGS and the lid on one of the communication pipes flips open. A crew member's voice comes out of the pipe:

CREW MEMBER #1 (V.O.)
War Minister, an engineer was ambushed -- his schematics were stolen!

Azula raises an eyebrow at this. The three girls exchange a look. Before the War Minister can respond, another report comes in:

CREW MEMBER #2 (V.O.)
War Minister, a brace on the starboard side has been cut clean through! It's sabotage, sir!

The War Minister is momentarily speechless.

AZULA
(chastising him)
Let's go, ladies.

INT. DRILL - SPACE BETWEEN THE MECHANISM AND THE SHELL - ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE FROM THE START - A BIT LATER

Aang and Katara hack away at the last brace. Sokka stands by with Momo on his shoulder. They cut through a satisfactory length of the metal and stop, exhausted. Katara sheaths the water in her holster-skin.

SOKKA
Good work, team Avatar! Now Aang just needs to -- DUCK!

The kids hit the deck as a blue fire blast suddenly flies over their heads. Ty Lee swings diagonally down the frame structure.

TY LEE
Wow, Azula, you were right. It <u>is</u> the Avatar!
(then, suggestively re: Sokka)
And friends.

Sokka notices her suggestive look.

SOKKA
Hey.

Ty Lee is upon the kids in an instant. Aang blasts her off the frame, but she quickly recovers, clinging to the inside of the armor shell. The kids look up and see Azula and Mai closing in on them, so they run back into the drill machine.

INT. DRILL - SYSTEM OF CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Aang (with Momo), Sokka and Katara run frantically through the corridors, trying to escape.

AANG
Guys, get out of here! I know what I need to do!

They nod and split up. Just as they are about to turn corners and lose sight of each other, Katara stops and turns.

KATARA
Wait! You need this water more than I do!

She flings her holster-skin down the corridor towards Aang, who catches it.

Aang and Momo disappear around the corner (as do Sokka and Katara, around their corner.) Azula, Ty Lee and Mai arrive at the intersection where the kids split up.

AZULA
Follow them! The Avatar's mine.

INT. DRILL - DEAD END CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Katara and Sokka come to a dead end. There is only a metal hatch leading into a big, noisy pipe. In a panic, Katara reads the inscription on the hatch.

KATARA
Slurry pipeline? What does that mean?

Sokka quickly opens the hatch and peers into the pipe. A river of slurry rushes below.

SOKKA
It's rock and water mixed together. It means our way out.

Mai and Ty Lee arrive at the scene, only to find Katara and Sokka moments away from plunging into the slurry. Mai slings some darts their way, but the kids slip into the pipeline in the nick of time. The girls run up to the hatch and peer inside. Mai suddenly loses her edge.

MAI
(deadpan)
Eww. Disgusting.

TY LEE
Come on, you heard Azula. We have to follow them.

MAI
She can shoot all the lightning she wants at me. I am not going in that wall-sludge juice. (SHUDDERS)

Ty Lee shrugs her shoulders and jumps into the pipe. Some slurry splashes up towards Mai, who recoils in disgust. She slams the lid shut and walks away nonchalantly.

INT. DRILL - UPPER PART OF DRILL MECHANISM - CONTINUOUS

In a quick succession of shots, Aang (wearing Katara's water skin) and Momo dart along catwalks and run up stairs and ladders.

He encounters a few engineers and workers, but he just blurs over, under, and around them before they even knew what happened.

EXT. DRILL - THE BACK END OF THE MACHINE - DRAIN FOR SLURRY PIPELINE

Massive amounts of slurry drain out of the back of the drill machine. Katara and Sokka squirt out of the pipeline and splat in the big, foul mess.

SOKKA
(UNINTELLIGIBLE NOISES OF EXTREME FRUSTRATION AND DISCOMFORT)

The kids recover and look around. They find that they are far behind enemy lines, with no one around due to the vast pool of slurry left in the drill's wake.

Suddenly, Ty Lee shoots out of the pipeline. Katara reacts quickly, bending a spout of slurry water up to meet her. She blasts Ty Lee back up to the mouth of the drain and holds her there, suspended. Slurry squirts in all directions around her, due to the pressure building up in the pipeline.

KATARA
(genuinely angry)
Why don't you try blocking my chi now, circus freak!

Sokka looks on as Katara stops up the pipe. He gets an idea.

SOKKA
Katara, keep that up! The pressure will build up in the drill, then when Aang delivers the final blow, it'll be ready to pop!

EXT. DRILL - TOP OF ARMORED SHELL - CONTINUOUS

Aang and Momo come out of the space between two segments of armor, emerging onto the top of the drill. Aang sees that the drill bit has embedded itself all the way into the wall, and now the body of the machine is following. He runs along the very apex of the rounded shell and finds the pattern of welding that tells him he is at the same point as the connectors.

AANG
This looks like a good spot, Momo.

Just then, a big boulder bounces off of the armor, right next to him. He flinches, and then looks up, irritated.

AANG (cont'd)
(at the top of his lungs)
General Sung! Tell your soldiers to stop shooting rocks down here!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TOP OF WALL - CONTINUOUS

General Sung barks out an order. (NOTE: Aang and General Sung are so far apart, they cannot actually see or hear each other.)

GENERAL SUNG
Soldiers, whatever you do, don't stop shooting rocks down there!

The soldiers continue to rain rocks down onto the drill.

EXT. DRILL - TOP OF ARMORED SHELL - CONTINUOUS

Hundreds of feet below the top of the wall, a torrent of rocks impact the shell all around Aang and Momo. Aang unsheathes the water from the holster-skin and starts to lash at the metal shell in a crisscross fashion, with Momo perched on his shoulder, on the lookout.

EXT. DRILL - THE BACK END OF THE MACHINE - DRAIN FOR SLURRY PIPELINE

A weary-looking Katara continues to bend the slurry, suspending Ty Lee at the mouth of the drain. Sokka continues to "coach" her, annoyingly.

SOKKA
Good technique, little sister! Keep it up! Don't forget to breathe --

KATARA
You know, I'm just about sick and tired of you telling me what to do all day! You're like a chattering hog monkey!

SOKKA
JUST BEND THE SLURRY, WOMAN!

TOPH
You guys need some help?

Katara and Sokka turn to see Toph wading through the muck in their direction.

KATARA
(still exerting)
Toph, help me plug up this drain.

Toph strikes a stance next to Katara and "pushes" at the drain.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DRILL - DEAD END CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

We see the slurry pipeline expanding and straining its seams.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. OUTER WALL OF BA SING SE - CONTINUOUS

Now with the drill bit buried in the wall, the pressure from Katara and Toph on the pipeline is building up. We see slurry squirting out from the edges of the hole, where the machine is entering the wall.

EXT. DRILL - TOP OF ARMORED SHELL - CONTINUOUS

Aang finishes cutting an X shape into the armored shell of the drill. He sheaths the water.

AANG
(out of breath)
What I'd give to be a metalbender...

Momo SCREECHES to warn Aang -- Aang whips around just in time to redirect (with AIRBENDING) a blue fire blast from Azula. The force of the blast knocks him back towards the wall, away from his X-shaped incision.

AANG (cont'd)
Momo, get out of here!

Azula SHOOTS again, but Aang meets her fire with a SWEEP KICK, sending an ARC OF WIND her way. Azula deftly PERFORMS AN AERIAL over his wind and lands even closer to Aang, immediately launching into a series of RAPID FIRE ATTACKS. Aang is quick with the WATER WHIP, slapping her hands and causing her attacks to veer just off course. She quickly changes tactics and sends a WIDE BURST OF FIRE towards Aang, which evaporates his supply of water and pushes him even farther back.

Before Azula can resume her attack, a torrent of rocks rain down on the shell all around them. They are both momentarily preoccupied with watching the skies and DODGING ROCKS. The last huge rock falls directly above Aang, but he takes advantage of the situation and redirects it (with EARTHBENDING) toward Azula. She flattens herself on the shell to avoid the rock, but springs immediately back into action SHOOTING FIRE at Aang. He draws up the rock debris around him (from the falling rocks) and FORMS IT INTO A PROTECTIVE WALL, which intercepts her fire blast. Aang PUNCHES THE PIECES OF ROCK from his wall, sending a series of SMALL EARTH ATTACKS at Azula. She draws one leg into a CRANE STANCE, using her shin armor to deflect an incoming rock, and subsequently KICKS FIRE at Aang with the other leg. She repeats this technique through all of Aang's rock attacks, and closes the gap between them.

Azula KICKS FIRE POWERFULLY at Aang, who has nowhere to go but straight back (since they are at the top of a cylinder.) Aang slams hard into the wall and crumples on the shell, dazed. It looks hopeless for him. Azula RUSHES FORWARD to end the fight, but just at the moment before she strikes the drill lurches forward, deeper into the wall, and sends her off balance.

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERIOR OF WALL OF BA SING SE - CONTINUOUS

We see the "cliff-side" military buildings on the inside of wall. Suddenly the huge tip of the drill bit breaks through the wall and shreds these buildings in an instant (NOTE: they are not occupied.) The Fire Nation has broken through the other side of the wall!

EXT. DRILL - TOP OF ARMORED SHELL - CONTINUOUS

Azula regains her balance. As the drill crawls forward, Aang's limp body slips into the gap between the shell and the edge of the hole (like he is on a conveyer belt being fed into a machine.) Azula grabs a fist full of his collar, drags him back out and holds him up against the wall. Aang's eyes flutter as he struggles to clear his head. We see his blurry POV as Azula RAISES HER HAND TO STRIKE. Almost instinctively, Aang tenses up his arm and pieces of rock suction onto it (like Toph in 209), CREATING A PROTECTIVE ROCK GAUNTLET. He SHIELDS HIMSELF WITH THIS GAUNTLET just in time to protect himself from her BLAST. Aang pumps his arm back and SHOVES HER FORCEFULLY in the stomach with his rock gauntlet.

Azula slides along the shell, about thirty feet back, with sparks flying up from her boots. She STOPS HERSELF IN A STRONG STANCE, and the two face off. Azula charges in a full sprint, but suddenly she and Aang are struck by streams of slurry, squirting out from the edge of the hole. She loses her footing on the now slippery shell and slides right towards Aang, who is struggling just to stand up. Azula slams into him like a bowling ball. The two bounce off each other and slide down opposite sides of the cylindrical shell.

With fierce determination, Azula tries to slow her descent. She flips over and kicks her metal toe spike into the armor shell, which stops her. However, she is now poised on the side of the machine, fifty feet off the ground. As Aang slides backwards he tries to claw at the metal with his rock gauntlet, but it crumbles. Just when he is about to plunge headfirst into the air, Momo grabs his cowl with his feet and flaps his wings desperately. It is enough of a lift for Aang to change position and AIRBEND himself back up to the top.

AANG
Thanks, Momo! I owe you one!

Momo CHITTERS and flies onto Aang's shoulder. Aang sees that his X-shaped cut is in danger of disappearing into the hole.

AANG (cont'd)
Now all I need is a --

BOOM! A big rock lands near Aang and splits into shards.

AANG (cont'd)
Actually, that is what I needed, for once.

Aang rolls a shard of rock over to the X-shaped cut. He chops at the rock to sharpen it into a big spike. Once it is ready, he BENDS IT INTO POSITION, perched in the cut like a golf tee. Aang turns and looks up at the towering wall, then down at his slippery, slurry-covered shoes. He takes off his shoes and tucks them into his sash.

Several yards back, Aang gets in a ready stance like a sprint runner. He takes of in a blur, running straight at the wall. When he gets to the slippery area near the hole, he quickly BENDS AN AIR SCOOTER. He zooms over the slippery section and banks onto the wall, riding the scooter straight up (like in 201.) When the ball of wind dies down, Aang sprints straight up the wall on his slurry-free bare feet. He gets as high as he can (about a hundred feet above the drill) and turns around and runs straight down at full speed (see Eric Idle in "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen.")

Azula manages to climb back up to the top of the drill and sees Aang barreling down the wall. She makes a move to ATTACK and fire starts to blast from her fingers. Just then, Aang leaps off of the wall and flies down straight at the rock. He lands on the top of the spike and SLAMS HIS HAND INTO THE ROCK (sort of like Bumi in 105.) BOOM!!! The spike is driven deeper into the shell, setting off a series of chain reactions. Aang's blast overpowers Azula's, and a fountain of slurry spouts from the X-shaped hole in the shell. Azula is blasted back in the slimy torrent, down the length of the drill.

INT. DRILL - SPACE BETWEEN THE MECHANISM AND THE SHELL - CONTINUOUS

We see the weakened braces snapping and the support structure giving way.

EXT. DRILL - CONTINUOUS

In a wide shot, the chain reaction of destruction is made visible by explosions of steam and slurry throughout the length of the drill.

EXT. DRILL - THE BACK END OF THE MACHINE - DRAIN FOR SLURRY PIPELINE

Katara and Toph are still bending the slurry to plug up the drain, but they hear the echoes of the blasting and the ensuing chain reactions.

TOPH
Here it comes!

Toph BENDS A PLATFORM OF EARTH to lift them out of the way just as the slurry BLASTS out of the back of the machine, with Ty Lee at the head of the wave. Ty Lee smacks into the side of their earth platform, pinned there by the rushing slurry.

EXT. OUTER WALL OF BA SING SE - CONTINUOUS

The damaged drill can no longer support its own weight. The structure collapses, shell segment by shell segment, and breaks off from the drill bit, which is still lodged in the wall. Aang rides this action like a surfer in a tsunami.

AANG
WHOOOOAAAA!!!

From a wide view, we see the bug-like drill "bleed" slurry and leak huge clouds of steam.

EXT. INTERIOR OF WALL OF BA SING SE - CONTINUOUS

The tip of the drill, protruding from the wall, slows to a stop.

INT. BRIDGE OF DRILL MACHINE - CONTINUOUS

The War Minister looks through the slurry-smeared windows of his observation room, incredulous.

EXT. TOP OF WALL - CONTINUOUS

General Sung looks down at the defeated drill, wiping a few splatters of slurry off his face, even at this great height. He too is incredulous.

EXT. DRILL - THE BACK END OF THE MACHINE - DRAIN FOR SLURRY PIPELINE

Ty Lee emerges from the pool of muck, and spits a spout of slurry out of her mouth. She looks around, but Katara, Sokka and Toph are long gone. Azula steadily slides down the smooth shell of the machine in a wave of slurry, finally plopping down in front of Ty Lee. They just look at each other. A hatch opens up on the back of the machine. Mai pokes her head out and looks down at them nonchalantly.

MAI
(deadpan)
We lost.

EXT. BA SING SE OUTER WALL - MONORAIL WAITING AREA - SUNSET

A monorail is in the station - a large, stone vehicle that is pushed along a smooth, stone track by Earthbenders.

CONDUCTOR
Last call for Ba Sing Se!

Uncle and Zuko board the monorail. Across the platform, Jet moves his way toward the Monorail with a fierce determination. Smellerbee and Longshot try to keep up.

SMELLERBEE
Jet, relax! So the old guy had some hot tea, big deal.

JET
He heated it himself. Those guys are Firebenders.

Jet at his gang get on the same monorail, a few cars back.

INT. MONORAIL - CONTINUOUS

As Uncle and Zuko take their seats next to Tahn, Ying, her baby, and Se. Uncle smiles at the baby.

UNCLE
What a handsome baby.

YING
Thank you.

The Earthbenders push the train out of the station.

EXT. TOP OF OUTER WALL - SUNSET

The kids stand on the wall, looking at the destruction below them. Aang hands Katara her water skin.

SOKKA
I just want to say, good effort out there today, Team Avatar.

KATARA
Enough with the Team Avatar stuff. No matter how many times you say it, it's not going to catch on.

SOKKA
How about...

Sokka strikes an exciting pose with his boomerang.

SOKKA (cont'd)
The Boomerang Squad!

There is no response.

SOKKA (cont'd)
See, it's good because it's got Aang in it. Boomer-AANG.

AANG
I kinda like that one.

KATARA
Let's talk about this on our way into the city.

The kids walk off into the distance.

SOKKA
The Aang gang?

KATARA
Sokka.

SOKKA
The Fearsome Foursome!

TOPH
You're crazy.

SOKKA
Why? We're fearsome.

END OF SHOW